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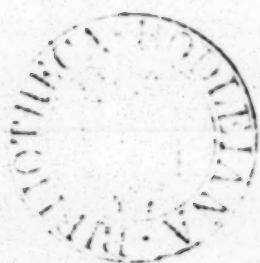
Hic manus, ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi,
Quique sacerdotes casti, dum vita manebat,
Quique pii vates, & Phœbo digna locuti,
Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes,
Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo.

VIRGIL.

By JOSEPH 'PRIESTLEY.
TUTOR in the LANGUAGES and BELLES LETTRES
in the ACADEMY at WARRINGTON.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

H U G H,

LORD WILLOUGHBY OF PARHAM,

P R E S I D E N T

Of the SOCIETY of ANTIQUARIES;

V I C E - P R E S I D E N T

Of the ROYAL SOCIETY, and of the SOCIETY
for the Encouragement of ARTS, TRADES,
and MANUFACTURES;

O N E O F T H E

T R U S T E E S for the BRITISH MUSEUM;

A N D P R E S I D E N T O F T H E

A C A D E M Y at WARRINGTON, &c. &c. &c.

The CHART of BIOGRAPHY,
And THIS DESCRIPTION OF IT,

Are, with the greatest Respect, inscribed

By his LORDSHIP's most obliged,

And most humble Servant,

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

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A DESCRIPTION of a

C H A R T

O F

B I O G R A P H Y.

THE proper employment of men of letters is either making new discoveries, in order to extend the bounds of human knowledge; or facilitating the communication of the discoveries which have been made already, in order to make an acquaintance with science more general among mankind. But few are qualified to make new discoveries of importance: a considerable share of natural genius, opportunity of making experiments, and a favourable concurrence of circumstances are requisite to it.

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GREAT improvements in science are not, therefore, in general, to be expected from men confined to their closets. Even the science of human nature requires a knowledge of the world as well as observations on a man's own internal feelings. But when discoveries have been made, and the principles of science have been ascertained, persons of inferior abilities, and without the advantage of any extraordinary concurrence of circumstances, are sufficient to digest those principles into a convenient method, so as to make the knowledge of them much easier than it was to the inventors.

Thus when the great Columbus had discovered the new world, any person acquainted with the common principles of navigation could give directions for sailing to it; and succeeding voyages were made with much less difficulty and hazard than the first. The same is true of the principles of the Newtonian Philosophy. No sensible preceptor would at this day recommend the study of Newton's Principia, or his treatise of Universal Arithmetic to persons unacquainted with the rudiments of that kind of knowledge; but would rather put into their hands treatises composed by persons infinitely inferior to that great father of the true philosophy, but which are notwithstanding much better adapted to the use of learners.

It is needless to inquire whether the few who make discoveries, or the many who extend the knowledge of those discoveries are more useful in
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the world of science. The labours of both are necessary to the propagation of knowledge, and an improved state of society. The former are with justice universally allowed the far greater share of reputation ; but the latter may surely be permitted to enjoy the solid satisfaction which arises from a consciousness of being usefully employed, and being necessary, though humble seconds, to their great masters.

ALL my ambition in the BIOGRAPHICAL CHART I now present to the public is to be a humble second to the great Historians, Chronologers, and Biographers of all ages and nations ; in exhibiting an united, a distinct, and a comprehensive view of the succession of great men of every kind, almost from the earliest accounts of things down to the present time ; to present the TABLET OF FAME to the youth who are beginning an acquaintance with men and things ; showing them what names will most frequently attract their attention, and how they stand related in point of time to one another : which, it is hoped, will give them, (along with a knowledge of the class of life in which they made a principal figure) a clearer idea of the time in which they lived, the relative length of their lives, the state of their cotemporaries, and the intervals of time which elapsed between them and their predecessors and successors, than any other method which hath hitherto been thought of for that purpose. And it must be acknowledged that to have clear ideas of these things is a matter of considerable consequence, and particularly

ticularly useful to students in Chronology, History, and Biography *

THIS Chart, which is about three feet in length, and two feet in breadth, represents the interval of time between the year 1200 before the Christian æra and 1800 after Christ, divided by an equal scale into centuries. It contains about two thousand names of persons the most distinguished in the annals of fame, the length of whose lives is here represented by lines drawn in proportion to their real duration, and terminated in such a manner as to correspond to the dates of their births and deaths in universal time. These names are distributed into several classes by lines running the whole length of the chart, the contents of each column being expressed at the end of it. The chronology is noted in the margin, on the upper side by the year before and after Christ, and on the lower by the following successions of kings, as the most distinguished in the whole period. The kings of Judah and of Persia; Alexander, and his successors in the Ptolemys of Egypt; the emperors of Rome, continued

** This chart was first drawn out to be made use of in an Academical Lecture upon the Study of History, as one of the mechanical methods of facilitating the Study of that science. One reason for having it engraved was that those young Gentlemen who attend the class might have an opportunity of providing themselves with a correct copy of it; and it is hoped that the sale of it will enable the author to oblige his pupils, at no great expence to himself.*

nued in the Eastern branch; and the kings of England from William the conqueror. In the small specimen here annexed the chronology is the same in both the margins, and the columns are but two, one for Statesmen and Warriors, and another for men of letters.

THAT there must be a peculiar advantage in a chart constructed in this manner I shall endeavour to show in as distinct and concise a manner as I can. As no image can be formed of abstract ideas, they are, of necessity, represented in our minds by particular, but variable ideas; and if an idea be capable of *quantity* of any kind, that is, if it admit of the modification of greater and less, though the Archetype, as it is called, of that idea be nothing that is the object of our senses, it is nevertheless universally represented in our minds by the idea of some sensible thing.

THUS the abstract idea of TIME, though it be not the object of any of our senses, and no image can properly be made of it, yet because it has real quantity, and we can say a greater or less space of time, it admits of a natural and easy representation in our minds by the idea of a measurable space, and particularly that of a line; which, like time, may be extended in length, without giving any idea of breadth or thickness. And thus a longer or a shorter space of time may be most commodiously and advantageously represented by a longer or a shorter line.

So natural and complete is the representation of different spaces of time by lines of different lengths, and so necessary is it to have pretty
exact

exact ideas of this subject, which can only be obtained by the help of some mechanical contrivance of this kind, that it is probable all persons whatever, without attending to it, actually have recourse to this method whenever they compare two or more intervals of time in their minds. The very epithets which, in all languages, are given to quantities of time do both imply this method, and suggest the use of it. *Long* and *short* are so universally applied to time, that, without particular reflection, it never occurs to us that there is any figure in the use of them, and that they are borrowed from any other subject. Now it is plain that when any person applies the terms *long* and *short* to the idea of time without apprehending any figure, or sensibly perceiving any harshness in the application, to him the properties of real length and shortness are the natural properties of time; and consequently the idea of something which hath length or shortness is actually suggested by the terms. And what can this be but the idea of a line, or at least something lineal?

It follows from these considerations, that to express intervals of time by lines facilitates an operation which the minds of all men have recourse to, in order to get a just and clear idea of them; and that the view of a number of lines drawn exactly in proportion to a number of intervals of time to which they correspond, will present to the mind of any person a more just and distinct idea of the relative lengths of the times they represent than he could have formed to himself without that assistance. If, for instance

stance, those several intervals of time be named to any person, the ideas of the lines, which he instantly forms in his mind whereby to compare them, must be made in a random and hasty manner; and moreover, not being excited at once by any sensible object, but in succession, and by the power of imagination only, they must vanish presently after they are made; so that it is impossible that distinct traces of more than a very few, if any of them, should remain in the mind at the same time. Whereas on a tablet, a person may view a great number of lines representing intervals of time, together; and besides, the idea being impressed on the mind by the view of a real sensible object, the contents of the tablet will be fixed in the imagination, not in succession, but at once; so that whenever the idea of any part of the tablet is recollected, the idea of the whole will start up in the mind, in consequence of the cotemporary association of the ideas of all the parts of it.

INDEED who hath not seen this exemplified in the CHART OF HISTORY imported from France, and published with improvements in England? It is past all dispute that a few minutes' inspection of that chart will give a person a clearer idea of the rise, progress, extent, revolutions and duration of empires than he could possibly acquire by reading: and it is almost certain that when a person hath once impressed his imagination with the figure which any particular country makes in that chart he can never wholly lose the idea of it.

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THE very same thing which hath been done for general history in that chart is proposed to be done for Biography in this ; and it is hoped with several peculiar advantages, which the nature of general history would not admit of ; besides that the same scale is made use of through the whole of the chart of Biography, whereas several are used in that of History : the consequence of which is that, in comparing intervals of time in different parts of that chart, the imagination is necessarily imposed upon. Even the notice which is given of this change is not sufficient to correct the error of the imagination, which is impressed mechanically by the view of the spaces, as they are laid down in the Chart. In exhibiting a view of History, ideas of place as well as of time must be represented ; and, on account of the real figure of the earth, it is impossible to make those countries which are contiguous in nature contiguous in a chart of such a form as is necessary in order to exhibit the successions of time : so that chasms and interruptions appear in empires upon the chart, when there were none in fact. Whereas, in Biography, there is nothing to be attended to but the circumstance of time only, which, as was explained before, admits of the most complete and easy representation by a line.

FROM this it is plain, that if a sheet of paper be divided into any equal spaces, to denote centuries, or otherwise, it will be a chart truly representing a certain portion of universal time ; and if the time of any particular person's birth
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and death be known, it is but joining the two points in the chart which correspond to them, and you have a line truly representing the situation of that life, and every part of it in universal time, and the proportion it bears to the whole period which the chart comprises. If others be inserted in the same manner, you see the relation which their ages likewise bear both to universal time, and to one another; from which it will appear by intuition, without the use of words, how long one was born before another, how far any number of persons were contemporary, and how far one life extended beyond another, together with every other circumstance which depends upon the relative length of lives and their relation to universal time

THEY are the lines in this case which suggest the ideas, and this they do immediately without the intervention of words: and what words would do but very imperfectly, and in a long time, this method effects in the completest manner possible, and almost at a single glance, when once it is known what life any line represents; which must be done by annexing written names of the persons to the lines which represent their lives. Let it be carefully remembered, however, that it is the black line under each name which is to be attended to, the names are only added because there was no other method of signifying what lives the lines stand for.

LET me desire the reader, for his satisfaction, to make an experiment of the use of the Chart, by means of no more than five names in the specimen annexed; viz Pindar, Sophocles, Xenophon,

Xenophon, Plato, and Terence. Let him attend only to his own ideas, though as carefully as possible, while he reads, that Pindar died 435 years before Christ, aged 86; Sophocles died 406, aged 91; Xenophon died 359, aged about 90; Plato died 348, aged 81; and Terence died 159, aged 35. Is it now easy, from these numbers, and all the mechanical assistance to which any person's mind is habituated, and can have recourse, to form a clear idea how these lives stand related to one another in the whole length of them? Can you even tell, without an arithmetical computation, whether Plato or Xenophon were born first, though ~~ten~~ 70 years intervened betwixt them. Please now to inspect the chart, and as soon as you have found the names, you see at one glance, without the help of Arithmetic, or even of words, and in the most clear and perfect manner possible, the relation of these lives to one another in any period of the whole course of them. And almost any number of lives may be compared with the same ease, to the same perfection, and in the same short space of time. Let the reader even write down the times of the births and deaths of these persons, after the manner of any chronological table whatever, and he will find that the idea of the relative length of their lives will not be suggested by it in a manner near to distinct.

It is an imperfection which must necessarily attend every chart of this nature, that the time of the death, but more especially the time of the birth of eminent men cannot always be found.

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In this case the compiler must content himself with placing his line as near as he can conjecture from history where his true place was, leaving marks to express the uncertainty there is attending it. The method I have used in this chart is to express certainty by a full line, and what is uncertain by dots, or a broken line, disposing of the dots in the following manner, according to the kind or degree of the uncertainty they have to express.

If it be thought that a person was born or died but a little before or after a certain time, the full line begins or ends at the certain time, and a single dot only is placed at the beginning or end of the line; see the line representing the life of Herodotus in the specimen. If history inform us that he was born or died *about* a certain time, a dot is placed just under the beginning or end of the full line see Philip and Thucydides. If the birth be certain but the death uncertain, the line begins full but ends in dots; as Abul Pharai and Alain in the chart. If, as is often the case, the death be known but the birth unknown, the line begins with dots, and ends full, see Epaminondas. When it is said that a writer flourished at or about a particular time, a short full line is drawn about two thirds before and one third after that particular time, with three dots before and two after it; because, in general, men are said to flourish much nearer the time of their death than the time of their birth. If it be uncertain even in what century a person lived or flourished, there is no full line made at all, but only dots or a broken line where I imagine it is most probable he
might

might have flourished see Suidas and Hesychius in the chart.

It were endless to give a particular account of all the authorities I have made use of in every part of this work, nor shall I mention the pains it has cost me to reconcile and adjust the different accounts I have met with concerning great numbers of them. It will not surprise any person conversant in Chronology and Antiquity, that some single names have cost me whole days to determine their dates, and often without succeeding to my wish after all. If the public be satisfied with the result of my researches, I shall be abundantly repayed for all the labour having fallen upon myself. I shall only just mention the names of the following works, almost every page of which I have carefully looked over and compared with one another, both in order to find proper names, and to ascertain the dates I wanted with the greater accuracy. *Universal History ancient and modern parts.* *Biographical Dictionary* 11 vols. 8vo. *Fabricii Bibliotheca Græca*, 14 vols. 4to. et latina, 1 vol. 8vo. *Vossius de Philosophia.* *Stanley's History of Philosophy.* *Biographia Britannica.* *Friend's History of Physic.* *Heineccii Historia Juris Civilis et Germanici.* *Walpole's Anecdotes of Painting.* *Blair's Chronological Tables.* *Cave's Chartophylax*, and many others, besides Magazines for late deaths, and histories of particular lives. Many dates I have been supplied with from books not professedly historical, and something I owe to the industry and information of my friends.

As the dates I wanted are given without any proof by most writers, I have always given the preference

preference to those who give reasons for the dates they assign, or those who seem to have considered the subject with the most attention. Thus, for example, I have preferred Friend's account of the times in which the antient physicians flourished to Vossius, and all the other writers who mention them.

It would be too hasty in any person to condemn the work upon finding that a few dates in it do not correspond to the authors he may consult about them. I have some authority for every date I have inserted, and it is at least an equal chance that mine (which have perhaps been altered several times, and always, as I imagined, from worse to better) are as good as his. And it, after all, a few mistakes have escaped my utmost attention, or that of the engraver (as no human work, and particularly of such a nature as this can be expected to be faultless) I hope no candid person will think it at all probable that they are either so numerous, or so great, as considerably to lessen the use of the whole.

It is necessary, however, that I give the public notice, that in all the earlier part of this work, I have followed the principles of Newton's Chronology, though they have not hitherto been adopted by any of our later chronologers: and I flatter myself that, to the judicious, it will be no small recommendation of this chart, that it exhibits a view of the cotemporary heroes in the Eastern and Western parts of the world according to that most rational system. Indeed this chart is a kind of ocular demonstration of that system: for here it will be found, upon examination, that
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kings and other persons whose names occur in sacred history stand near those who are said to have lived the same number of reigns or generations distant from one another in profane history. And the intervals of successions and generations will be seen to be nearly the same in all parts of the chart, as the uniformity of the course of nature requires. Whereas many persons who are made cotemporary upon these natural principles, had I followed the bulk of chronologers, must have been separated above three centuries, a thing manifestly incredible. The classical reader, I hope, will not be displeased with seeing Dido and Æneas placed side by side, after having been so long, and so far separated by tasteless chronologers.

It will easily occur to all my readers, that my greatest difficulty must have been the proper choice of names to fill this tablet of fame; and some degree of solicitude is certainly unavoidable when a man voluntarily assumes the province of the arbiter and dispenser of every man's reputation, and when he sees all the dead pass, as it were, in review before him for that purpose. But this is no greater presumption than is implied in numberless other works, and is in fact no more than one man's giving his present opinion of others. The nature of the design necessarily assigned some limits to the width of the columns, and though in some ages there was room enough for all the candidates for fame, if I would have inserted them; in others, and particularly in modern times, where no reasonable column would admit a tenth part of the candidates, it
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must require no small judgement to decide concerning their respective pretensions. With respect to this, I can only say that I have acquitted myself with all the impartiality of which I was capable.

HOWEVER a due regard to the nature of my design made the task much easier, and less invidious than may at first sight be imagined. My rule, I considered, was renown and not merit; acquired fame, and not deserved reputation: so that a person who had made a great noise in the world, though he were known by nothing but the devastation he had made in it, was more acceptable to me than one who had deserved ever so well of it, if he had passed through it without being much known. And it is manifest that if this chart be designed for the use of persons who are beginning an acquaintance with history, it must be drawn up according to this rule. Otherwise it would not show them the situation of the names they are most likely to look for in it.

THIS rule will account for my inserting more names, in proportion, of those called hereticks and infidels, in the column of Fathers and Divines, than of the friends and defenders of our holy religion; because the few names of the opposers of any prevailing or established mode of religion are much oftener mentioned, and more generally known than the names of the many who stand up in the defence of it. Is it not probable that the name of *Arius*, for instance, hath been much oftener mentioned both in conversation and writing than the names of perhaps all his antagonists.

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put together? Not to say that open opponents are always the best friends of every truly good cause: a maxim which, I hope, requires no explanation at this day.

I AM sensible it would be extreme arrogance in any person to pretend to so accurate and extensive a knowledge even of the proportion of renown which all men of every profession have acquired, as would enable him to select the most distinguished names with so much exactness, that none of those who are omitted should be more noted than any of those who are inserted: yet thus much I hope the diligence of my inquiries may encourage me to say, that though some instances may occur, to more diligent and longer continued researches, of persons of greater note omitted, and of less note inserted, yet that the fame of all those who are omitted would bear an exceeding small proportion to the fame of those who are inserted.

I AM convinced, however, it is absolutely impossible to please many persons with the choice of names upon such a plan as this. No two persons living would make the same choice. I will even venture to say, from my own experience, that no one person would, at different times, make the same choice. It is only such an experience as I have had that can convince any person how extremely fluctuating, our ideas of the relative fame of many different persons, and of the figure they have made in the world is. The many times I have altered my lists convinces me that I should never revise them without seeing some reason to make further alterations;

tions; but the many times that I have replaced the same names after having rejected them convinces me that further alterations would have been of very little consequence.

BEFORE a person expresses great surprize at my omitting or over-looking any favourite of his, let him consider particularly at what time he flourished; for hundreds which have been excluded in later and more crowded ages would have found a ready reception in an earlier period; so that their exclusion must not be attributed either to my fault or their own. Let it always be remembered that the celebrity of any person is to be compared with that of his cotemporaries, and not with that of those who made their appearance either before or after him.

I RECOLLECT only one instance (in the column of Divines, Moralists, and Metaphysicians) in which I have departed from my general rule of giving place to present fame, in favour of extraordinary merit, and what I presume will be great future reputation. If I be mistaken in my presumption, I hope I shall be indulged a little partiality for one favourite name, when I declare that, to the best of my knowledge, I have given no such preference to any other.

IN return for this indulgence, I have given the purchasers of this chart an equal opportunity of showing their own particular attachments: for, excepting a few crowded places, I have left room enough in the chart to supply my omissions, by inserting whatever names they please. Besides lines may be drawn in any place,

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even where names cannot be inserted; and as the person who inserts them will know what lives they represent, the names are quite superfluous. And there will always be increasing room to insert those who die after the publication of the chart, at least till the Year 1800, a date which none who are now capable of perusing this chart can reasonably expect to see.

No body can be at a loss for the reason why the name of no person who is yet living, and particularly of my countrymen is inserted: yet if I could easily have come at the age of Voltaire, and a few other illustrious foreigners, I believe I could not have resisted the desire to anticipate in part those of my purchasers who may out live those distinguished writers, by drawing the line of their lives as far as fate has yet drawn it.

I HAVE perhaps inserted rather more Englishmen in proportion than those of other nations, but this was not owing to any national prejudice; but as renown is a relative thing, regard must necessarily be had to the minds of those into whose hands the chart is most likely to fall. Had I drawn the chart in order to its being published in any other part of the world, even in France, I should naturally, with the same ideas of relative fame, have made a different choice of names. If the chart, as it stands at present, seem calculated rather for men of letters than of business, let it be attributed to a similar reason.

NEITHER the number, nor the width of the columns was determined at random, and *a priori*, but both were made such as the names I had previously

previously collected appeared most naturally to require. Fewer columns I could not have made, and at the same time have preserved any tolerable distinctness, and more columns would have enlarged the width of the chart without any considerable advantage. I might, for instance, have assigned intire separate columns for the Poets and Artists, but as some ages furnish more Poets than Artists, and others more Artists than Poets, I had an opportunity of enlarging and contracting the spaces allowed to both alternately, without increasing the width of the whole column, and thereby enlarging the whole chart. And no confusion could arise from this method, since the Poets and Artists still keep to their own respective sides of the column. The same may be said of the columns appropriated to any other classes of men in conjunction.

It will be necessary to explain more particularly the disposition of the names in two of the most crowded columns, as the titles at the bottom are not quite sufficient to direct a person where to find any particular name readily.

THE first column of Statesmen and Warriours is very full. To prevent confusion in such a crowd of names, (besides placing those persons the nearest together who had the most connections, and whom I thought it would be most amusing to compare together) I have always assigned the first places, that is, the lowest side of the column (which is next to the eye in the usual method of hanging maps) to the most Westerly people, and have removed those of the more

Eastern countries to the opposite side. Thus, to begin with the first part of the column, the Grecian heroes occupy the nearest places, and the Egyptians, Jews, Persians, and other Asiatics are placed beyond them. The Athenians are also generally placed before the Lacedemonians. As the Romans come in, they are made to enter by the front line, while the Greeks remove farther backwards. For the same reason when these Western nations grow considerable, they enter as the Romans did, while the Romans march off the stage the same way that the Greeks did before them, all giving place to persons more Westerly and nearer to this island than themselves. In later ages I have placed the English and Scots next the front line, the French next to them, and those of the rest of Europe still farther off, always reserving the more remote part of the column for the Asiatics, and other people the most remote from us. By these directions I hope it will be easy to find any name that may be wanted in this crowded column.

THE next column is necessarily a very miscellaneous one. But I hope the following description of it will make it appear sufficiently distinct. The Jewish Prophets and Rabbis always keep close to the farther side of the column. The Heathen Philosophers at first occupy the rest of it, afterwards, as their numbers diminish, they fall to the nearer side, leaving the middle space to be filled by the Christian Fathers; who are followed by the Schoolmen, as they are by the more modern Divines, Moralists, and Metaphysicians. The
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few Mohammedan Doctors are placed next to the Jewish Rabbis ; And the Popes, as they partake of the nature both of Divines and Statesmen, I have placed next to the Statesmen in the column of the Divines. Otherwise, in this, as in all the other columns, I have generally given the nearest places to the English, though this rule was not so necessary as it is in the first and most crowded column, and therefore is not so rigorously adhered to. Let it be observed also that the heathen Philosophers are placed pretty exactly according to the several sects by which they were distinguished, in the following order, beginning at the nearer side of the column ; the Italic, Ionic, Sceptic, Cyrenaic, Megaric, Eleack, Aristotelian, Socratic, Epicurean, Platonic, Eleatic, Stoic, and Cynic.

THE classing of the names occasioned some little difficulty to me, and may occasion some to the peruser. My general rule has been to place every person in that class in which he was most eminent. Thus I have placed Mohammed, as the head of a celebrated sect in religion, among the Divines ; though the Caliphs, his successors, will be found among the Statesmen. As I have more columns for men of letters than for men of business, I have generally classed persons of a mixed character among the writers. Thus, with me, Machiavel and Clarendon are Historians ; though Cicero will be found among the Statesmen, and not among the Orators ; because I thought it would be more agreeable to see him in company with Cæsar, Pompey, Antony, Brutus, Cassius, &c. than with the few men of

letters with whom he was connected at Rome. Also, when my columns began to be nearly full, and some were in danger of being more crowded than others, I have made no scruple to place a person I wished to introduce in any place to which his reputation could justly intitle him, rather than absolutely to exclude him. Thus several persons finding no room among the Divines, were obliged to content themselves with a place among the Historians or Critics: but then they really were Historians or Critics, and these cases are not many. No person who has not actually tried can be a judge of the difficulty there is in bringing a number of names into as small a compass as possible, and yet adjusting them to advantage in other respects at the same time. The view of the chart will give no idea of that difficulty.

I HAVE begun the chart with David, in order to take in all the more early part of the Grecian history. If I had begun earlier, I should have had no names for the greatest part of my columns, and to have begun later, at Cyrus for instance, I must have omitted some names in all the columns too considerable to be omitted, particularly Homer and Hesiod. But though it would have been inconvenient to carry back the large chart to a much earlier period; I thought it might gratify the curiosity of some of my purchasers to see it continued: I have therefore drawn a CONTINUATION of it, consisting of a few principal names in the scripture history, upon a smaller scale, according to the two most celebrated systems of chronology the Hebrew and the Septuagint,

Septuagint, a most distinct and easy comparison of which this view exhibits. The very great disagreement of those two systems enables me to carry one of them as far back as the creation, in the same space that is but sufficient to carry the other as far as the birth of Noah. For the Hebrew computation I have followed Blair, except in his mistake with respect to the age of Moses and Aaron. For the Septuagint, from the time where the two systems differ, I have followed Jackson, the most able and strenuous defender of that system.

As to the number of the names, I am more afraid of being censured for admitting so many, than for not admitting more. But let any person put himself in my situation, among such a number of competitors, and I think he would feel himself strongly inclined to oblige as many of them as possible. Perhaps, before he was aware, he would widen his columns too much, so as to make the greatest names less conspicuous by reason of the crowd which he had brought about them, rather than refuse very many. I think no reason will be required for the order in which the columns are placed. Indeed I have little to offer in an affair which is so very nearly arbitrary. I thought there would rather be a convenience in placing the most crowded columns nearest to the eye, and the situation of the rest of the columns was determined by a regard to some propriety or other, real or imaginary, but none worth mentioning in this place

LABORIOUS

LABORIOUS and tedious as the compilation of this work has been (vastly more so than my first conceptions represented it to me) a variety of views were continually opening upon me during the execution of it, which made me less attentive to the labour. As these views agreeably amuse the mind, and may in some measure be enjoyed by a person who only peruses the chart, without the labour of compilation, I shall mention a few of them in this place.

It is a peculiar kind of pleasure we receive, from such a view as this chart exhibits, of a great man, such as Sir Isaac Newton, seated, as it were, in the circle of his friends and illustrious contemporaries. We see at once with whom he was capable of holding conversation, and in a manner (from the distinct view of their respective ages) upon what terms they might converse. And though it be melancholy, it is not unpleasing to observe the order in which we here see illustrious persons go off the stage, and to imagine to ourselves the reflections they might make upon the successive departure of their acquaintance or rivals.

WE likewise see, in some measure, by the names which precede any person, what advantages he enjoyed from the labours and discoveries of others, and, by those which follow him, of what use his labours were to his successors.

AND by the several void spaces between such groups of great men, we have a clear idea of the great revolutions of all kinds of science from the very origin of it; so that the thin and void places

places in the chart are, in fact, not less instructive than the most crowded, in giving us an idea of the great interruptions of science, and the intervals at which it has flourished. We see however no void spaces in the column of Statesmen Heroes and Politicians. The world hath never wanted competitors for empire and power, and least of all in those periods in which the sciences and the arts have been the most neglected.

BUT the noblest prospect of this nature is suggested by a view of the crowds of names in the columns appropriated to the arts and sciences in the two last centuries. Here all the columns of renown, and, I may add, of merit are full, and a hundred times as many might have been admitted, of equal attainments in knowledge with their predecessors. This prospect gives us a kind of security for the continued propagation and extension of knowledge; and that, for the future, no more great chasms of men really eminent for knowledge will ever disfigure that part of the chart of their lives which I cannot draw, or ever see drawn. What a figure must science make, advancing as it now does, at the end of as many centuries as have elapsed since the Augustan age!

IT is possible that some amusing observations may occur to a person upon a view of the remarkable length of some lives. It appears at the first sight of the chart, that men who have been famous have lived, one with another, fifty or sixty years a piece. It generally requires a good constitution, and a considerable age, either for
great

great achievements in politics, or discoveries in science. We are not surprized to see that the antient Heathen Philosophers generally lived to a great age, but is it not extraordinary that so many of the late celebrated Painters should be long lived too?

TIME is continually suggested to us, by the view of this chart, under the idea of a *river*, flowing uniformly on, without beginning or end. *Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum.* If we compare the lives of men with that portion of it which this chart represents, they are little more than so many small straws swimming on the surface of this immense river, strongly expressing the admirable propriety of those lines of Dr. Watts, concerning the eternity of God.

While, like a tide, our minutes flow,
The present and the past ;
HE fills his own eternal now.
And sees our ages waste.

Even the most distinguished men, and when separated from the rest of mankind, whose names have perished with them, make a very inconsiderable appearance.

AGAIN, notwithstanding this tablet exhibits the greatest names which the theatre of this world can boast, all the reputation that man can gain appears very inconsiderable when we reflect, how many are gone before us whose applause we can never hope to obtain, how extremely indistinct is the reputation of many who
made

made the greatest figure in past ages, and how far they are eclipsed by the reputation of those who have succeeded them.

LASTLY, it hath a peculiarly striking and happy effect upon the mind to consider how widely different a TABLET OF MERIT would be from this TABLET OF FAME; how many names would be wholly obliterated, and how many new ones absolutely unknown to the world would take their places, upon changing the one into the other. And, considering that these tables will at length be changed, that this tablet of fame will be cancelled, and that of merit, or moral worth, produced, never to be changed more, how much more solicitous should we be, even from a passion for true fame, to have our names written in the tablet of real merit, though as yet concealed from human view, than in the tablet of mere present and perishable renown; having in prospect that time in which *the righteous only shall be had in everlasting remembrance, while the name of the wicked shall rot.*

N. B. The price of the CHART, together with the CONTINUATION, and this DESCRIPTION and SPECIMEN of it is, *£.10.6*

••• With the CHART will be given a
CATALOGUE of all the Names inserted in it,
and the DATES annexed to them.

